

4 (amended). The method of claim-1, wherein the fabric has a particle removal efficiency of at least 98% when the quantity of the liquid is at a challenge volume of 10 milliliters.

5 (amended). The method of claim 1, wherein the fabric has a particle removal efficiency of at least 96% when the quantity of the liquid is at a challenge volume representing 130% of the sorptive capacity of the fabric.

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1-7 of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Response to Restriction Requirement

The Examiner imposed a two-way restriction requirement in the following groups.

- I. Claims 1-7, drawn to a method of using a nonwoven fabric, classified in class 15, subclass 210.1
- II. Claims 8-15, drawn to a nonwoven fabric, classified in class 442, subclass 408.

The Applicant's attorney elected Group I with traverse in the July 9, 2001 telephone conversation with the Examiner. That election is now affirmed.

Rejection Under 35 USC 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as indefinite apparently for reciting a use without any active positive steps delimiting how the use is practiced.

Claims 1-5 have been amended and Applicant believes that the rejection has been overcome and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn as to Claims 1-7.

Rejection Under 35 USC 101

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 USC 101 because the Examiner deems that the recitation of a use without setting forth any steps involved in the process results in an improper process claim.

As was noted above, Claims 1-5 have been amended. Applicant believes that this rejection has been overcome and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn as to Claims 1-7

Rejection Under 35 USC 102

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Applicant's admission. The Examiner's position appears to be that because the fabric used in Example 4 is commercially available, then the recited dynamic wiping efficiency and particle removal efficiency was already in the prior art.

Applicant traverses the rejection and further notes that because the claims have been amended to show process steps, therefore the claims should not be examined based on the structural limitations of the nonwoven fabric.

As such, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

First Rejection Under 35 USC 102/103

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by or in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent 4,888,229 to Paley et al (Paley).

The Examiner notes that Paley discloses certain elements of the invention, such as, use in cleanroom environments. The Examiner admits that Paley does not explicitly teach the limitations of dynamic wiping efficiency and particle removal efficiency, but argues that such limitations are inherent to the invention.

The subject invention represents the discovery that certain fabrics as recited in the subject claims were previously believed to be incapable of achieving Class 10 or better cleanliness for cleanroom applications. Applicant has found that when the fabrics are used as described, these heretofore "unacceptable" fabrics are found to be equal to or better than the alleged superior woven or knitted products. There is nothing in Paley that discloses this finding and nothing that discloses a nonwoven fabric as being able to attain Class 10 cleanliness.

As such, the rejection is improper and it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Second Rejection Under 35 USC 102/103

Claims 1-5 and 7 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over United Kingdom Publication GB 2 309 466A to Johnson et al. (Johnson).

The Examiner offers Johnson as disclosing a hydroentangled fabric of lyocell. However, as noted above with regard to Paley, the Examiner admits that Johnson does not teach the limitation of dynamic wiping efficiency and particle removal efficiency, but suggests that these limitations are inherent to the invention. For the same reasons as offered above relative to Paley, Applicant reiterates those points and respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 USC 103(a)

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paley in view of Johnson.

The Examiner offers Johnson to provide the limitations of hydroentanglement that is missing in Paley. However, there is still no suggestion from the combination of the two references of the subject invention as represented by the amended claims. Moreover there is no disclosure or suggestion from the references either individually or in combination of a method of using a nonwoven fabric to achieving a Class 10 or better cleanliness for cleanroom applications as recited in subject claim.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that the foregoing is a complete response to the subject Office Action. Applicants believe that all rejections have been overcome and that the instant claims are now in condition for allowance. If any matters remain for resolution, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1 (amended). A method of using a nonwoven fabric for wiping in Class 10 or cleaner cleanrooms as determined by FED-STD-209E, wherein the fabric is comprised of fibers selected from the group consisting of polyester, lyocell, and blends of polyester with lyocell, comprising the steps of

contacting with the nonwoven fabric a quantity of liquid present on a surface,

removing from the surface by wiping with the nonwoven fabric at least a portion of the quantity of the liquid and wherein the surface from which the liquid was removed has a cleanliness of at least Class 10 as determined by FED-STD-209E.

2 (amended). The method of claim 1, wherein the fabric has a dynamic wiping efficiency of at least 89% when the quantity of the liquid is at a challenge volume of 10 milliliters.

3 (amended). The method of claim 1, wherein the fabric has a dynamic wiping efficiency of at least 70% when the quantity of the liquid is at a challenge volume representing 130% of the sorptive capacity of the fabric.

4 (amended). The method of claim 1, wherein the fabric has a particle removal efficiency of at least 98% when the quantity of the liquid is at a challenge volume of 10 milliliters.

5 (amended). The method of claim 1, wherein the fabric has a particle removal efficiency of at least 96% when the quantity of the liquid is at a challenge volume representing 130% of the sorptive capacity of the fabric.

